

A photograph of two people walking a dog on a forest path in autumn. The path is covered in fallen yellow and orange leaves. The forest is dense with tall trees, many of which have yellowing foliage. The scene is captured from a low angle, looking down the path. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and scenic, typical of a fall hike in a wooded area.

# Outdoor Recreation in Iowa

A Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan



# Executive Summary

In 1968, the first Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan was written. This was a 10 volume plan entitled Outdoor Recreation in Iowa, the first time a comprehensive plan for recreation and the protection of fish, wildlife, and historical resources was compiled. That year was also the first one to require states to submit a recreation plan in order to receive federal funds, distributed through the National Park Service Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF).

Every five (5) years since that time, Iowa has been developing a recreation plan. This year, back to its original title “Outdoor Recreation in Iowa,” marks the 8th plan. The approach to this plan is a little different than others in the past. The focus of the National Park Service for the LWCF is measuring for success. This includes information from the states not only about how the funds are being used, but also identifies tangible and intangible outcomes. Therefore, in this plan, the DNR has focused on four (4) plan goals, 11 performance goals, and 22 performance measures that relate directly back to the National Park Service LWCF goals. This plan primarily focuses on the performance goals and an example of a successful project that best represents the meaning behind each goal.

The Outdoor Recreation in Iowa Plan is a stepping-off point for outdoor recreation planning. Throughout this process, it became clear that there still needed to be additional human dimensions studies. In some states, this work is done continually. In Iowa it has been sporadic. Through the development of this plan, it became obvious that Iowa needs to continue this work throughout the entire five (5) years of this plan cycle at the local, regional and state level. Planning at a statewide level can only accomplish so much. Planning at the local level, however, can supply the resources/opportunities that meet Iowans’ needs close to home.

The following statement was buried in the middle of the 1972 Outdoor Recreation in Iowa Plan. It is a statement that still fits today. It is hoped that when this plan is amended 5 years from now, strides will have been made to get more Iowans outdoors.

“This statement taken from the 25 year Conservation Plan for Iowa, written nearly forty years ago will help to emphasize a change that has occurred with the attitude of Iowans:

There are many people in the state who can remember, within their own lifetime, the rich flora and fauna of even fifty years ago. There has not yet been time for the comparative devastation of the original conditions to be accepted as a “natural” condition, and a material proportion of the citizenry keenly regrets the destruction which they themselves have seen going on. They will not rest until every practicable step has been taken to recover a fair measure of the original richness of the Iowa country.

Let it suffice to say we have forgotten and stopped to rest?”

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B - Iowa Survey for the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan - Nonparametric Analysis

# Introduction

Recreational Development is a job not of building roads into the lovely country, but of building receptivity into the still unlovely human mind.

- Aldo Leopold

## About the Land & Water Conservation Fund

In 1963, President Kennedy proposed legislation that established the Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), carrying forward a recommendation made by the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission in 1961. This fund was to assist states in planning, acquisition, and development of recreation resources as well as a guide to purchase new Federal recreational areas.

After much debate and after two years of discussions, bipartisan support was finally achieved and a Land & Water Conservation Fund bill was passed and signed into law on September 3, 1964. This new act established funding for the creation of parks and open spaces, protection of wilderness, wetlands, and refuges, preservation of habitat, enhancement of recreational opportunities, and for matching grants to state and local governments for recreation planning and development. A condition of the Act for the dissemination of the matching grant funds was the development in each state of a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). These plans are developed, updated, and submitted to the National Park Service every five (5) years. Federal grant obligations totaling \$3.6 billion have been matched by State and local contributions, for a total LWCF grant investment of \$7.2 billion since its inception.

In 2003, the Office of Management and Budget reviewed the Land and Water Conservation Fund State Assistance Program. The report following this review indicated that program goals, performance goals, performance measures and success indicators needed to be restructured to accurately assist in reporting what can be accomplished through this funding. In 2004, the National Park Service worked with state partners and constituent groups to develop the following goals and measures.



National Program Goals	Performance Goals	Performance Measure
1. Meet state and locally identified public outdoor recreation resources needs to strengthen the health and vitality of the American People.	1. Increase quantity of outdoor recreation resources for public use and enjoyment	Number of new parks created for public outdoor recreation use and enjoyment.
		Number of new acres of land and water made available for public outdoor recreation use and enjoyment.
		Number of parks where new outdoor recreation facilities were developed.
		Number and types of new outdoor recreation facilities.
	2. Enhance the quality of outdoor recreation resources for public use and enjoyment.	Number of parks enhanced through new development or rehabilitation of outdoor recreation and support facilities.
2. Increase the number of protected state and local outdoor recreation resources and ensure their availability for public use in perpetuity.	3. Ensure close-to-home public outdoor recreation resources.	Number of local jurisdictions where LWCF grant projects are located
	4. Increase the number of acres of protected outdoor recreation resources for public use and enjoyment 5. Ensure that outdoor recreation resources funded through the LWCF Program are retained and used for public outdoor recreation in perpetuity	Number of new acres protected
		Number of new sites protected under the LWCF Program.
		Number of LWCF projects inspected and determined to be open for public outdoor recreation use.
		Percent of inspected acres funded by the LWCF determined to be open for public outdoor recreation use.
3. Encourage sound planning and long-term partnerships to expand the quantity and ensure the quality of needed state and local outdoor recreation resources.	6. Stimulate planning initiatives to help states identify outdoor recreation needs and establish the implementation strategies to meet those needs.	Total number approved SCORP plans.
		Number of SCORP plans that were updated in 2005
	7. Leverage local and state matching investments that support outdoor recreation projects.	Number of projects that exceed the 50% non-federal match.

Note: From the Land and Water Conservation Fund State Assistance Program 2005 Annual Report

## Iowa's LCWF Funding and SCORP Plan

LWCF has provided nearly \$46 million in matching grants to the State of Iowa, its cities, and counties. Over 1,200 parks and open spaces in the State have benefited (see page 18). Within the last two years the fund has been distributed as follows:

- **FY 05 funds = \$1,191,753**
  - \$31K for the development of the 06 SCORP
  - \$580,376 for competitive grants
  - \$580,376 for state projects
- **FY 06 funds = \$370,704**
  - \$185,352 for competitive grants
  - \$185,352 for state projects

Iowa submitted the first SCORP in 1968, titled *Outdoor Recreation in Iowa*. This report was a comprehensive report that blended reports for LWCF, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife Planning, and the State Historical Action Program, and was intended to replace the "Iowa 25 Year Conservation Plan." Over the past 38 years, these plans have been used by many city, county, and state agencies. Grants through programs such as, Fish Habitat, Wildlife Habitat Stamp, Resource Enhancement and Protection, Land & Water Conservation Fund, and Recreational Infrastructure Funds all require projects to reference back to the current SCORP plan and indicate how the projects accomplish goals set forth in the plan. Over these 38 years, the SCORP has gone through many editions and biennial State Action Plans. This plan is the ninth edition.

## Foundation of the Action Plan

The primary function of Iowa's action plan is to assess the supply of, and the demand for, outdoor recreational opportunities. The plan creates recommendations for a wide base of recreational experiences for all Iowans to enjoy.

An action plan development committee was initiated in 2004 and is made up of representatives from all Bureaus in the Conservation & Recreation Division of IDNR, plus representatives from the Iowa Association of County Conservation Board Directors. Committee members are:

- Action Plan Coordinator – Michelle Wilson
- LWCF Coordinator – Kathleen Moench
- State Parks – Angela Corio
- Wildlife – Todd Bishop
- Fisheries – Martin Konrad
- Forestry – Linda DePaul
- Law Enforcement – Steve Derman
- County Conservation Boards – Dan Heissel and Keri Van Zante

Following the structure set by the National Park Service the committee worked on developing the following four (4) goals for the action plan:

- 1. Meet local recreation needs by providing close-to-home opportunities**
- 2. Increase availability of outdoor recreation resources to the public.**
- 3. Enhance the quality of outdoor recreation resources**
- 4. Encourage state, county, city and private sector planning for recreation to meet the needs of Iowans**



In the fall of 2005, Responsive Management conducted 8 focus group sessions around the state of Iowa. Focus group sites were structured around three large urban areas (which are also located on the three major rivers in Iowa) and five rural areas. The following map (figure 1) indicates the areas that were selected..

# SCORP Regions and Focus Areas

The map displays the following counties and their locations relative to the SCORP regions:

- Northwest Region:** Lyon, Osceola, Dickinson, Emmet, Winneshiek, Worth, Mitchell, Howard, Winnebago, Allamakee, Kossuth, Hancock, Cerro, Floyd, Chickasaw, Fayette, Clayton, Plymouth, Cherokee, Buena Vista, Pocahontas, Humboldt, Wright, Franklin, Butler, Bremer, Buchanan, Delaware, Dubuque, Woodbury, Ida, Sec, Calhoun, Webster, Hamilton, Hardin, Grundy, Black Hawk, Monona, Crawford, Carroll, Greene, Boone, Story, Marshall, Tama, Benton, Linn, Jones, Jackson, Clinton, Harrison, Shelby, Audubon, Guthrie, Dallas, Polk, Jasper, Poweshiek, Iowa, Johnson, Cedar, Scott, Muscatine, Pottawattamie, Cass, Adair, Madison, Warren, Marion, Mahaska, Keokuk, Washington, Louisa, Mills, Montgomery, Adams, Union, Clarke, Lucas, Monroe, Wapello, Jefferson, Henry, Des Moines, Fremont, Page, Taylor, Ringgold, Decatur, Wayne, Appanoose, Davis, Van Buren, Lee.

Focus areas (black dots) are located in the following counties:

- Clay
- Winnebago
- Polk
- Pottawattamie
- Union
- Henry
- Muscatine

### Table 1: Survey Distribution

The full report can be viewed at [www.iowadnr/grants/scorp.html](http://www.iowadnr/grants/scorp.html).

## Performance Goals and Measures of the 2006 Action Plan

5

allowing for continued funding at the national level. Below you will find the four goals of this action plan and corresponding performance goals and measures. In chapter 3, each of the

performance goals are discussed in greater detail. Performance Goals have not been prioritized. Each goal provides recommendations, challenges, and success stories.

Goals of the Plan	Performance Goals (Priorities)	Performance Measures
1.Meet local recreation needs by providing close-to home opportunities	1. Develop e-SCORP, an on-line statewide recreational database.	Track web hits to determine usage of the system. See a 25% increase in usage after the 1 <sup>st</sup> year.
	2. Using a marketing approach, promote local available recreational opportunities.	Targeted 18-45 age groups should show an upward trend in participation.
		New recreation based projects or programs requesting grant funding from the Department will include a localized measurement for public satisfaction.
		Decrease by 10% latent demand in festivals and events and educational programming through increased participation in these opportunities
	3. Encourage lowans to improve physical and mental health through outdoor recreation	Number of community-to-public land connections in the state through trail connectors (land and water).
		Increase by 5% the use of trails (walking, running, bicycling, canoe/kayak) for physical fitness to aid public health.
	4. Provide for local outdoor skills workshops and programs (families, couples, men, women, teens, and children) to help get people outdoors and active.	5% increase in participation in workshops.
		50% of workshop attendees will purchase hunting/fishing licenses or camp in state, county, or federal areas after the workshop.
		25% of youth attending workshops will participate in youth hunt weekends, fish and or camp with family or friends (assessed through follow-up surveys)
2. Increase availability of outdoor recreation resources	5. Increase outdoor associated recreation, focusing on additions to existing public lands and public lands near population centers.	Use of all public lands will increase by an average of 25,000 visitor-use days annually.
		Increase the amount of land in public ownership by an average of 2.5% annually, concentrating on lands within 50 miles of major metropolitan areas.

		Under the 2.5% annual goal of public land ownership, 0.25% (1,750 acres) should be directed toward wetland complexes in priority landscapes in the prairie pothole region. Of this acreage, a minimum of 400 acres of wetland habitat should be restored and/or protected each year with the majority of the remaining acres restored to native tallgrass prairie.
	6. Create conservation corridors (greenbelts) to improve water quality, recreation opportunities, and wildlife habitat.	Increase the number of access improvements, new facilities, and acres of public land acquired.
		Develop a series of core habitat blocks in the range of 3,000 – 5,000 acres of permanently protected and managed habitat that can also be used for public recreation.
		From performance goal 6 above, an additional 0.25% (1,750 acres) should be directed toward restoration and permanent protection of wetland habitats along rivers in priority conservation corridors or greenbelts. Of these lands, a minimum of 600 acres of wetland habitat should be restored and/or protected each year.
3. Enhance the quality of outdoor recreation resources	7. Provide assistance to local communities and governments to improve the quality and revitalize the recreational use of priority water bodies.	6 lakes will have improvements initiated.
		Initiate 2 shallow lake restoration projects per year. Funds should be provided to protect and restore natural shoreline, to acquire public lands adjacent to shallow lakes to provide a buffer from agriculture, urban, and other similar land uses, to construct water control structures, and to secure the outlets to these lakes to provide and maintain the ability to manipulate the water levels.

	8. Plan, develop, and maintain natural resources through an ecosystem based approach to protect the endemic flora and fauna and provide a quality recreational experience.	Developed invasive species management plans that provide early detection strategies to control exotic invasive species.
		Performance measures, as they relate to wetlands, for goals 6-8 above require an ecosystem approach and evidence that they fit in a plan developed at that scale.
	9. Enhance public health and safety and protect environments through upgrading or developing new horizontal infrastructure facilities to meet current environmental standards as well as today's recreational demand.	25% increase in projects/grants requesting upgrades or rehabilitation of sewer, water and electrical systems, roadways and trails.
	10. Enhance recreational opportunities through upgrading or constructing new vertical infrastructure facilities to respond to current recreational demands.	15% increase in projects/grants requesting funding for projects that are representative of activities that lowans said they would like to participate in but are not currently.
4. Encourage state, county, city, and private sector planning for recreation to meet the needs of lowans	11. Develop toolboxes for state, city, and county leaders for plan development.	All government entities that seek grant assistance from the Department will have a current recreation plan.
		With planning assistance, three (3) pilots (1 in each SCORP region) will create a go-forward plan that brings together components of individual plans and all four goals of this plan, to include evaluation tools reported in the next recreation assessment in 2011.



# State of Iowa Profile



Dr. Thomas H. Macbride, considered the father of conservation in Iowa and president of the University of Iowa (1914-1916), spoke out in the June 1931 Palimpsest about the need to start conserving pieces of Iowa land for public recreational, educational, and scientific uses. He believed that “this establishment of parks, would promote public health and happiness, serve as community object lessons in forestry, and preserve to those who come after us something of the primitive beauty of this part of the world.” When the first of Iowa’s 84 state parks was finally dedicated in 1920, the local citizens, politicians, bands, and conservationists came out en-force to celebrate a new, as Dr. Macbride put it, “place of quiet beauty” preserved for all future Iowans. These were places where families explored, picnicked, and relaxed. They were local tourist areas and by the early 1930s they were a popular state institution. In the early 30s there were 36 dedicated state parks that had about 180,000 people visiting. Half that many visited all of the national parks at that same time.

Conservation leaders in the early 1900s thought that Iowans were busy, but the Iowans of today are far busier than our forefathers could have imagined. Households in Iowa typically consist of two income families. People are working well into their 60s and 70s. They have longer commute times, active children, and less “down time.” How adults and children spend that down time is important.

We’ve all heard the term “quality of life” in the last couple of years. Communities strive for it and businesses recruiting new employees promote it. The wide variety of recreational opportunities, the resources of the state, and the make-up of the people in Iowa all contribute to this quality of life.

## Demographics

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Iowa's population in 2005 was estimated at 2,862,541. That is an increase in 630,688 people since 1900 (table 2). Comparing the previous (5) years, however, the population overall has decreased by 2.2% with a slight increase in Iowans 18 years and over (table 3). By age, Iowans 65 years and over are a large portion of the population. Nationally our population continues to increase and on October 17, 2006 at 6:46 A.M. the United States population hit a record 300,000,000 people.

Table 2: Iowa's Population compared to the U.S. over time

Year	Iowa Population	U.S. Population
1900	2,231,853	76,212,168
1910	2,224,771	92,228,496
1920	2,404,021	106,021,537
1930	2,470,939	123,202,624
1940	2,538,268	132,164,569
1950	2,621,073	151,325,798
1960	2,757,537	179,323,175
1970	2,824,376	203,211,926
1980	2,913,808	226,545,805
1990	2,776,755	248,709,873
2000	2,926,324	281,421,906
2005	2,862,541	296,410,404

Table 3: 2000 Census data compared to 2005 data.

Topics	2000 Census	2005 Census Estimates
Population	2,926,324	2,862,541
Male Population	1,435,515 (49.1%)	1,409,206 (49.2%)
Female Population	1,490,809 (50.9%)	1,453,355 (50.8%)
18 Years and Over	2,192,686	2,194,615
65 Years and Over	436,213	402,167
Median Age	36.6	38.6

Listed in the following figures are the basic demographics of Iowa out of 1009 households surveyed by Responsive Management. Data from this survey is significantly comparable to data obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau (table 3).

Figure 2: Gender by SCORP Regions

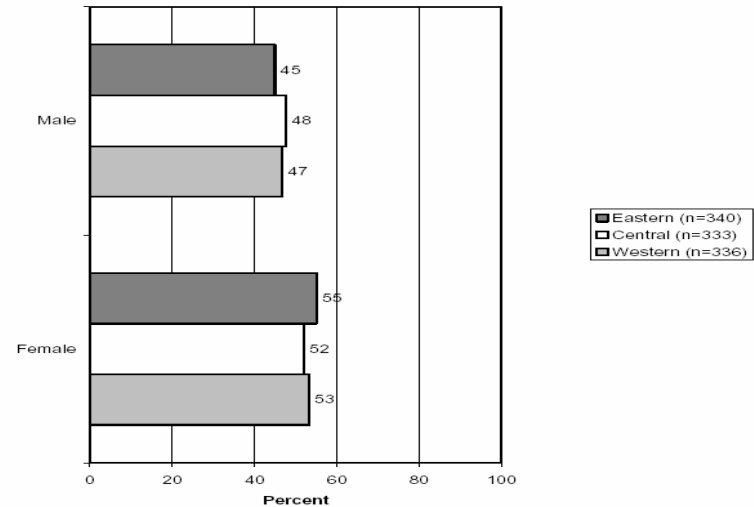


Figure 3: Age Distribution by SCORP Region

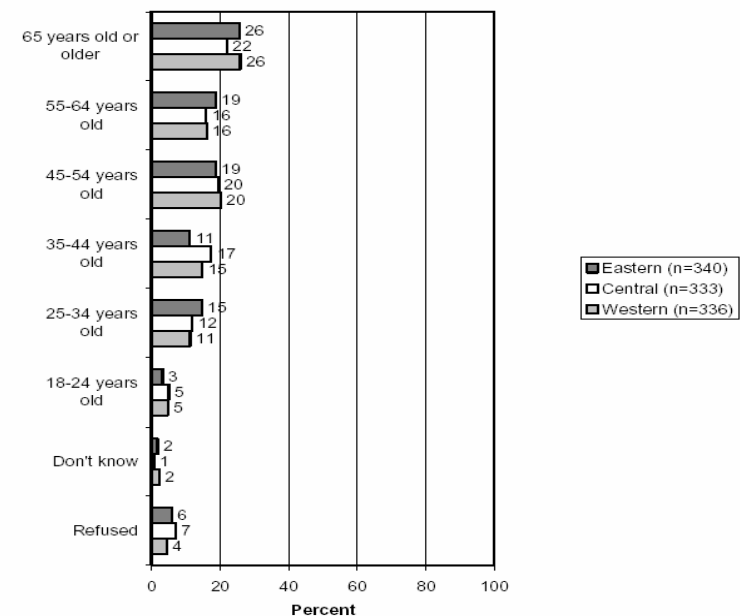
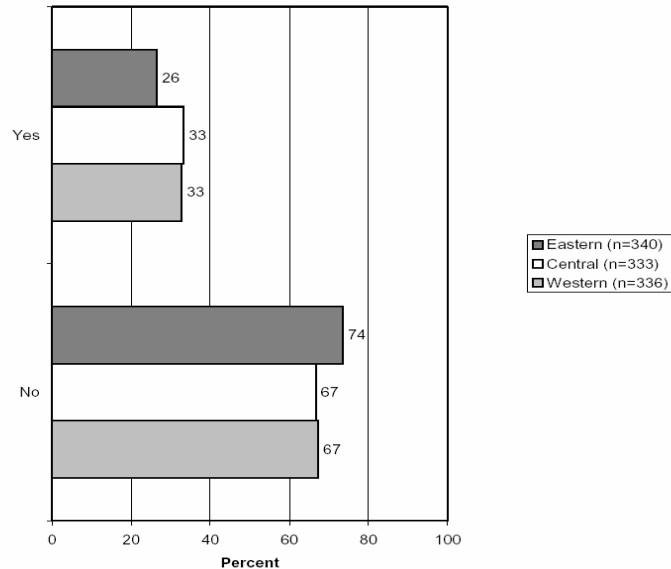


Figure 4. Children 17 or younger living in the household by SCORP Region.



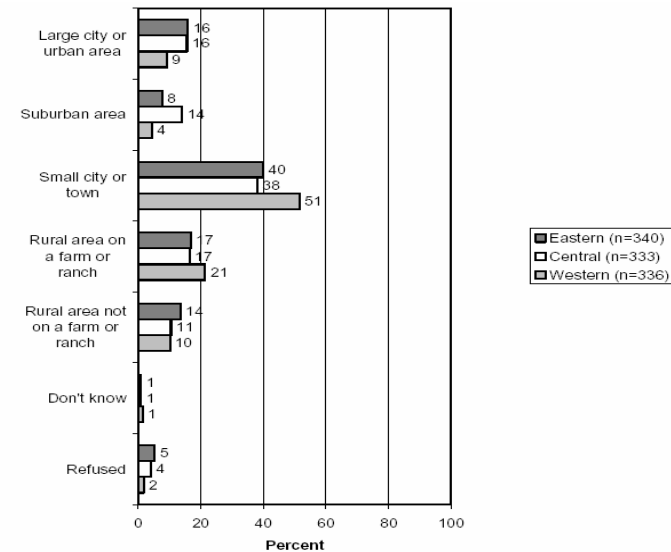
What is not represented by just assessing population, age and gender is the movement and interests of this population.

Iowa's populations have moved over time from rural communities and farms to urban cities and to their suburbs (figure 6). You can see a trend, as you drive through the adjacent countryside of suburbia, the movement of people to 1-2 acre homesteads out in the "country." The 1972 Outdoor Recreation in Iowa Plan predicted this movement:

*"The desire for a small acreage to insure the type of environment associated with a 'home in the country' will rapidly increase during the next decade."*

With the movement to the country will come an increase in commute time to work and a potential decrease in the amount of leisure time available for recreation. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the average commuting time to work is 18 minutes one-way, 36 minutes daily, and 3 hours weekly traveling in a car.

Figure 6: Residence by SCORP Region



Other contributors (barriers) to decreased leisure time for outdoor recreation come from overtime hours spent at the workplace, children's involvement in extracurricular activities, civic involvement/volunteerism, technology influences, and health issues. Data obtained in the 2006 survey showed that for Iowans 65 years and older health issues were a huge barrier to participation in outdoor recreation. To younger Iowans, barriers such as workplace and children's commitments kept them from participating or increasing their participation. These are barriers, along with gas prices and unfavorable weather conditions that agencies charged with managing public recreation are not able to control.

Barriers such as cost to participate, travel time, difficulty finding information, inadequate facilities, insufficient opportunities and crowding, on the other hand, are issues that are impacted by decisions agencies make.



## **Resources**

Prior to settlement, Iowa was blessed with a rich diversity of natural resources. From the Mississippi River on our eastern border through the rolling tall-grass prairies, riverine systems, glaciated wetlands and lakes, sand-blown loess, and the Missouri River as the western border, this land was habitat for a wide variety of flora and fauna. This landscape proved to be a fertile home for the life sustaining needs, crops, and livestock of the settlers over 150 years ago.

In 2005, the Department submitted to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service a document entitled, "Securing a Future for Fish and Wildlife: a Conservation Legacy for Iowans." This document is also known as the Iowa Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan and is the first attempt ever to enumerate most of the state's wildlife and evaluate the status of each species. It also examines stresses on wildlife or their habitats and lays out visions and strategies to conserve wildlife over the next 25 years. Even though this document doesn't assess individual plant species, it does assess habitats and the relationships to wildlife species. For a complete comprehensive look at Iowa's resources go to [www.iowadnr.com/wildlife/files/IAcomprehensive\\_plan.html](http://www.iowadnr.com/wildlife/files/IAcomprehensive_plan.html).

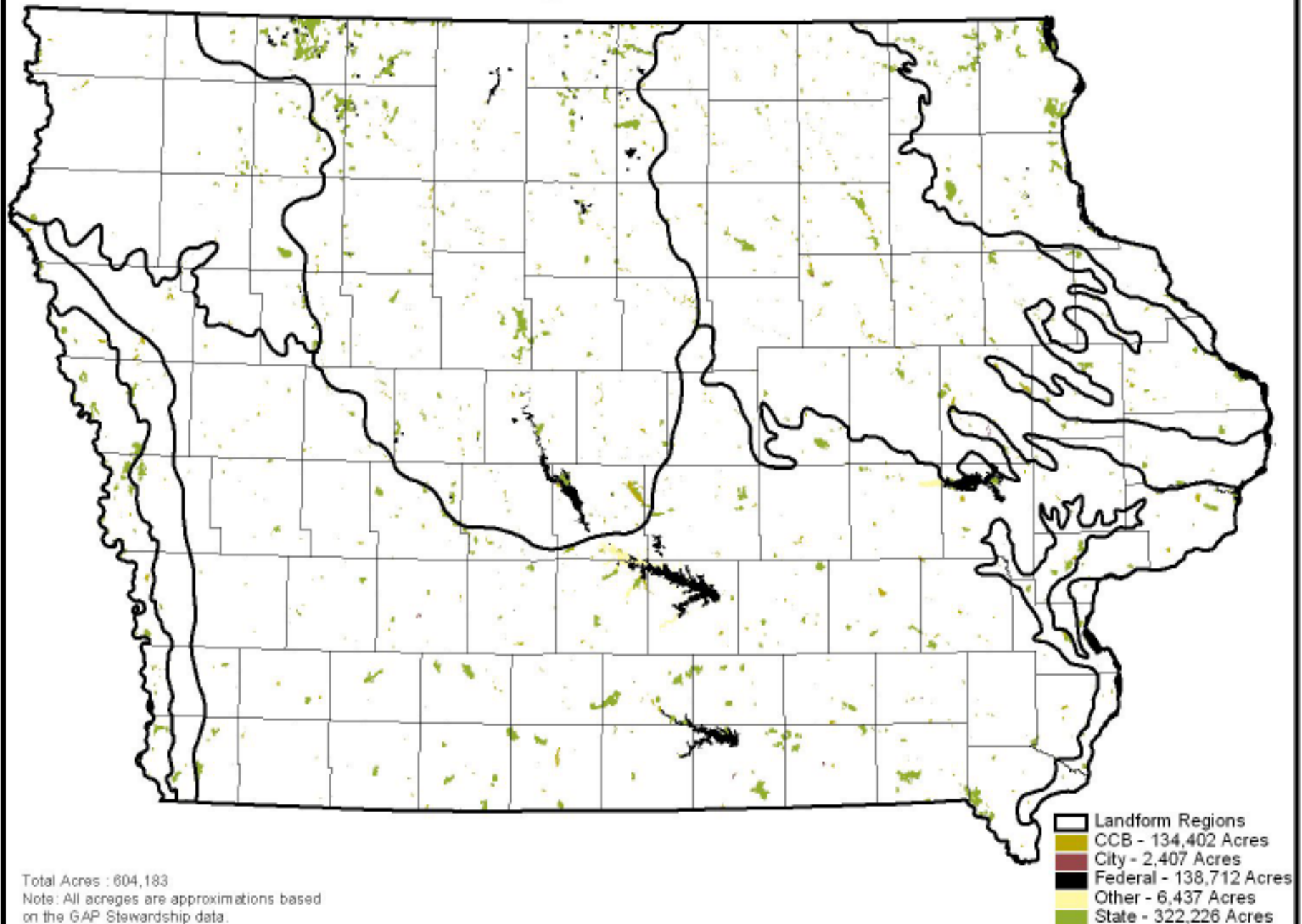
Iowa has about 56,239 square miles between its borders with only about 2% of natural resources in public ownership managed by federal, state, county, and city governments. (see figure7, Existing Public Lands) Currently Iowa ranks 49th in the nation for percentage of land that is available for public recreation. This public land is comprised of:

- 85 State Parks
- 190,882 Acres of Federally Owned and Managed Land

- 93 State Preserves
- 10 State Forests Comprised of 45,000 Acres
- 453 Wildlife Management Areas Comprised of 331,641 Acres
- 19,000 Miles of Interior Rivers
- 203,000 Acres of Water in the Border Rivers
- 16 Natural Glacial Lakes
- 23 Shallow Natural Glacial Lakes
- 152 Constructed Lakes
- 51 On-Stream Impoundments
- 32 Oxbow Lakes
- 4 Federal Flood Control Reservoirs
- 136 Surface Mines
- 245 Ponds on Public Land
- 1,000 Ponds on Private Land
- 1,350 Miles of Shared-Use Trails
- 254 Miles Equestrian Trails in State Parks
- 645 Miles Hiking Trails in State Parks (unpaved)
- 5,000 Miles Snowmobile Trails
- 8 ATV Parks Comprising 1,560 Acres
- 32 Archery and Shooting Ranges

Agencies manage these resources for the flora and fauna that continue to thrive in this state as well as for recreational opportunities for Iowans. This management can be difficult at times. When is the public's use engaging and appropriate versus when is it damaging and inappropriate? What is the optimum balance and how is it achieved? These are questions that public land managers struggle with and why continuous assessment and planning for flora, fauna, and recreation is crucial in maintaining an appropriate balance.

## Existing Public Lands

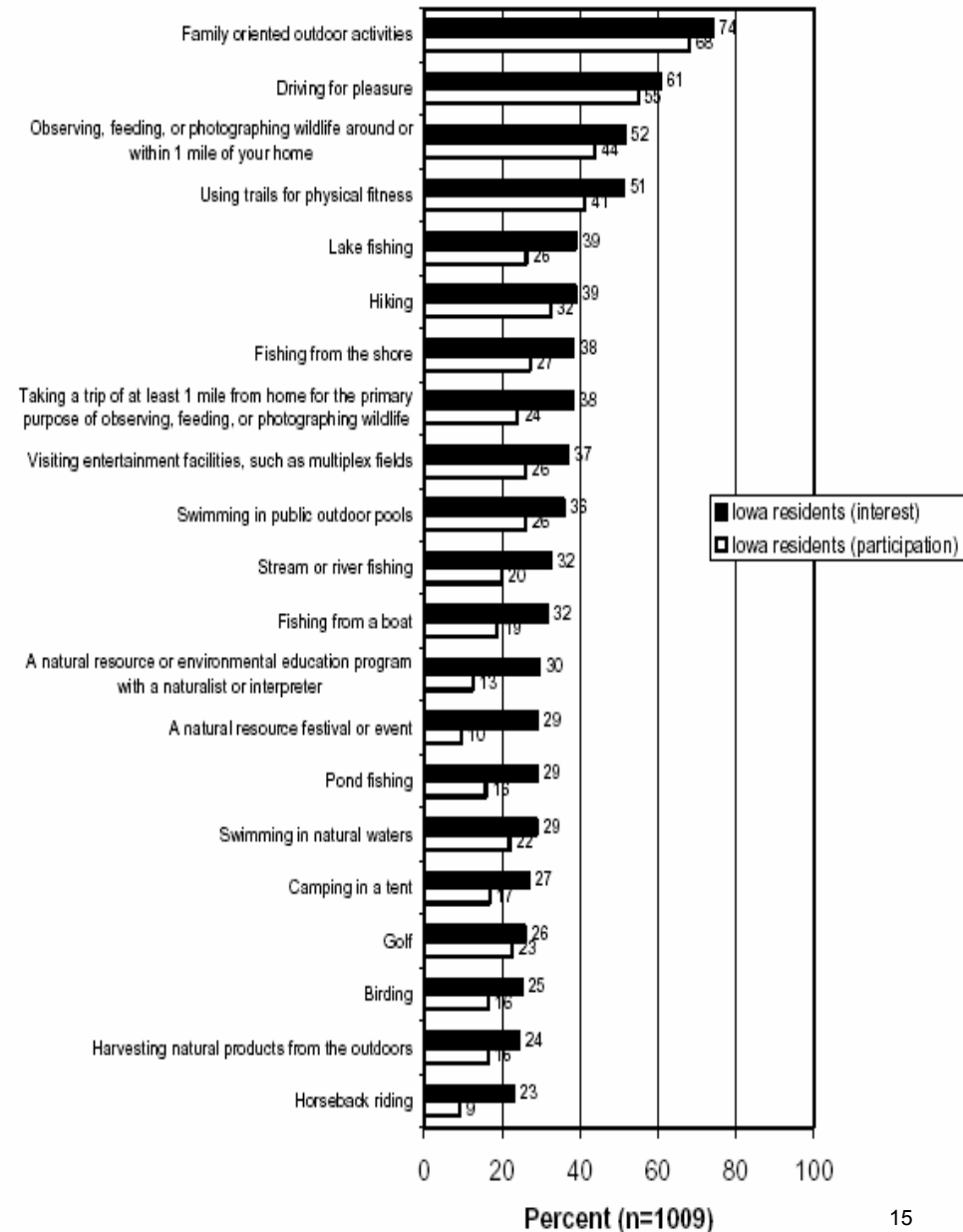


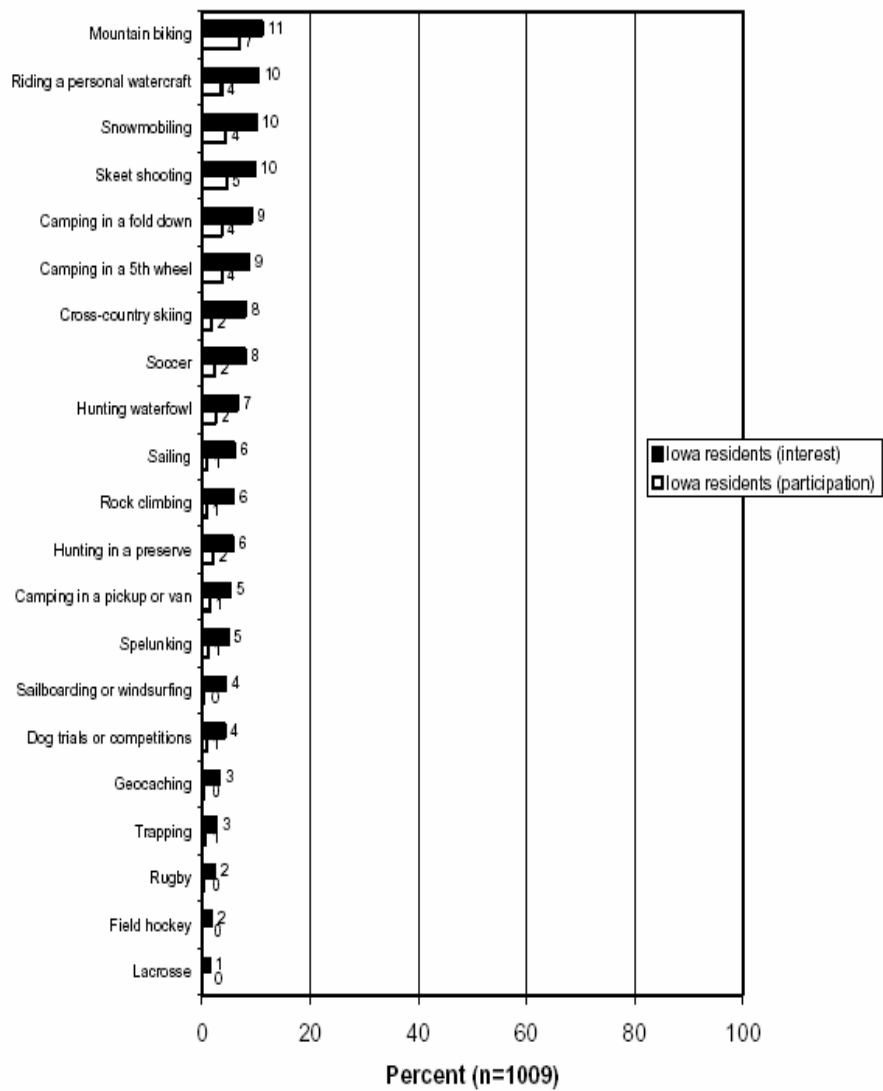
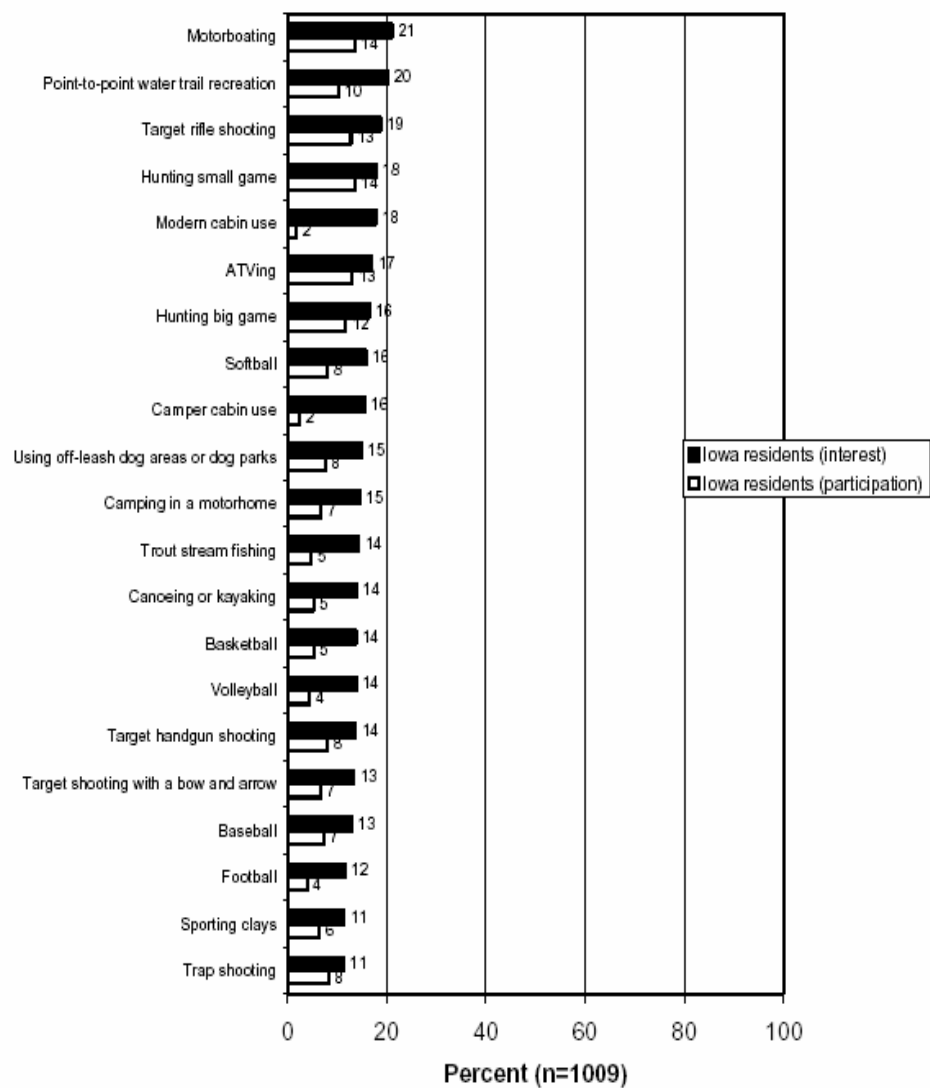
## Recreation Trends

Nationally, trends in recreation have remained fairly stable over time. According to the Outdoor Industries 2004 national survey, the top five recreational activities are bicycling, fishing, hiking, camping, and trail running. Based on the 2006 survey of Iowans by Responsive Management, the top four activities are family oriented activities (defined as picnicking or other outdoor family gatherings); driving for pleasure; observing, feeding, or photographing wildlife within 1 mile of home; and using trails for physical fitness (see figures 7,8, and 9). When comparing the results of the 2000 survey of Iowans to the 2006 survey, many of the same activities had high participation. However, the 2006 survey looked at a wider range of potential activities.



Figures 7,8, 9: List of Recreation Activities Iowans are currently participating in and are interested in.







According to Travel Industry Association of America's TravelScope®/DIRECTIONS® Research Program, travelers throughout our state originate from Iowa (59%) and are going to see family and friends. 53% are taking day trips but travel consistently throughout the entire year. Out of the top 10 activities, two could include outdoor recreation activities: touring/sight-seeing; and Parks, national and state. The top three activities are shopping, dining, and entertainment.

Surveys conducted by the Department in the past five years show that Iowans who participate in one outdoor activity usually participate in at least 2-3 other outdoor related activities. Those activities that can be accomplished in a day or in a couple of hours are also those activities with higher participation rates and activities that are continuing to grow. Trips that are close to home, done in a day, and require little to no equipment are those that fit into limited leisure time.

Through targeted marketing, education, information, and resource management and acquisition efforts, outdoor recreation can meet the time constraints and demands of today's Iowans while preparing to increase participation in the future generations.

## **Grant Opportunities**

Cities, County Conservation Boards, and the Department have been continuing to increase the quantity and quality of recreational opportunities throughout the state. Through the assistance of grant funding, these agencies have developed small and large projects. Projects could range from the upgrading of a playground structure or development of a new shelter to the upgrading of a large campground electrical system or land acquisition/habitat improvement.

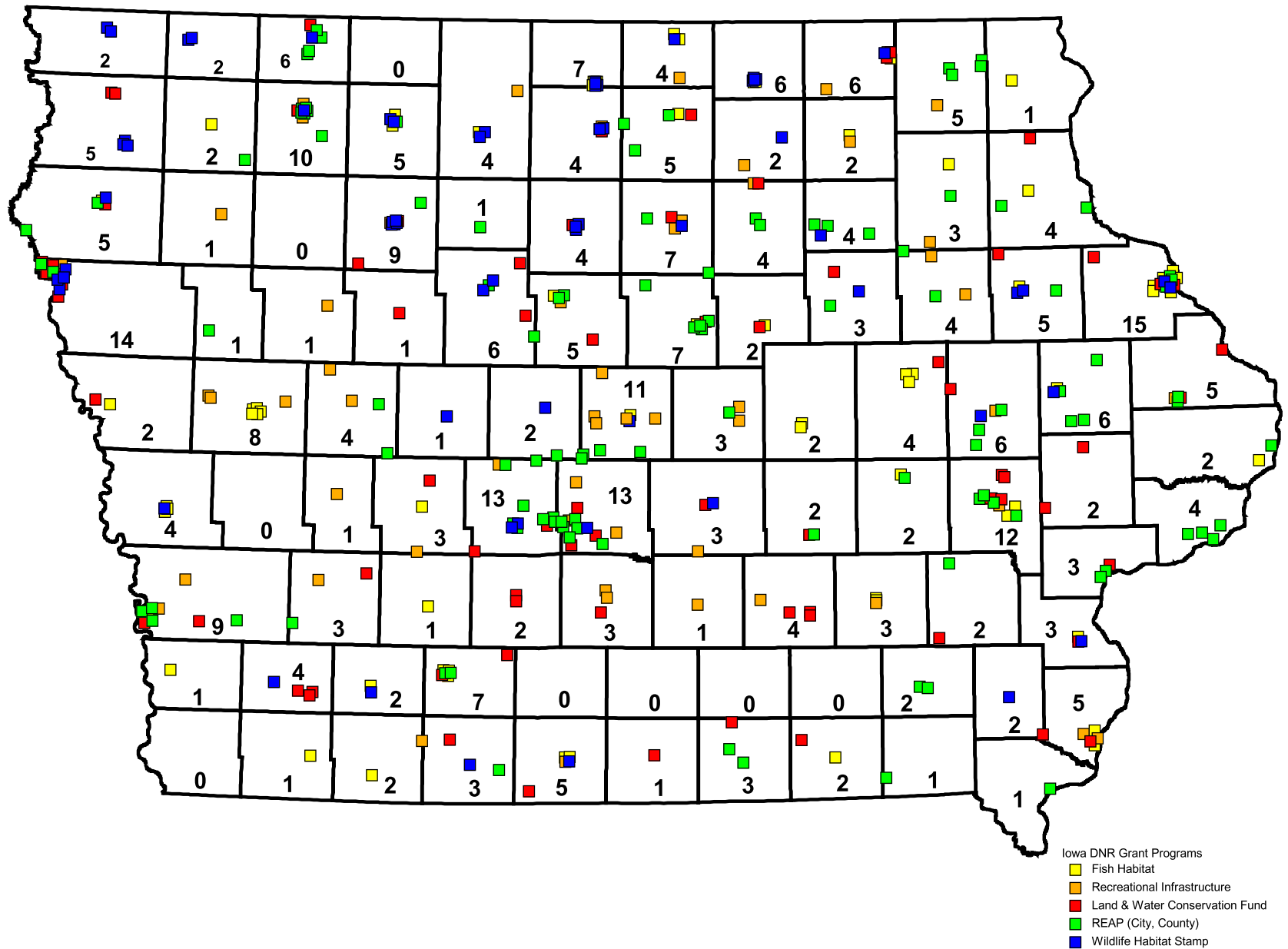
Figure 8 is the statewide distribution of five grant fund programs for the past five years. Only eight counties did not receive funding during this time period. The remaining counties received 376 grants totaling \$26,363,118. Individually projects ranged from \$2,000 up to \$400,000 from the following grant funds:

- Land And Water Conservation Fund Grant
- Resource Enhancement and Protection City, County, (REAP) Grants
- Fish Habitat Grant
- Wildlife Habitat Stamp Grant
- Recreational Infrastructure Grant

Agencies also receive funding from REAP Conservation & Education Grants, Iowa Department of Transportation Trails Grants, ATV and Snowmobile Grants, Water Trails Grants, and Marine Fuel Tax Grants. Most projects are not accomplished by a single agency alone; they usually involve working closely with partner groups such as Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, and organized clubs, just to name a few.

For the Land And Water Conservation Fund grants, applicants must provide a local recreation plan and indicate how grant requests fit into priorities of this plan.

Figure 7. Distribution of Five IDNR Grant Program Funds



# Goals For Outdoor Recreation

## Goal 1: Meet local recreation needs by providing close to home opportunities

In order to keep lowans recreating outdoors, agencies, natural resource stakeholders, and special interest groups need to consider what is being done close to population centers. With a reduction in available leisure time, lowans need to know what natural areas are available locally and what they can do there. This plan goal identifies 4 performance goals that provide lowans the tools to make decisions about where they want to go and what they want to do for recreation. These performance goals are:

- Develop e-SCORP, an on-line statewide recreational database.
- Use a marketing approach to promote available recreational opportunities.
- Encourage lowans to get physically and mentally healthy through outdoor recreation.
- Provide outdoor skills programs/workshops (families, couples, men, women, teens, and children) to help get people outdoors and active.

A success story of a project or program that exemplifies the meaning accompanies each goal.



Photo By Lowell Washburn

## **Performance Goal 1: Develop e-SCORP, an on-line statewide recreational database.**

### **Recommendation**

In order to lead Iowans in caring for and utilizing our natural resources, we have to provide the correct information in a consistent and user-friendly way. Today, many people utilize the internet to plan trips and vacations. E-SCORP is an internet tool for Iowans that will enable them to click on a county or activity and find out about recreational opportunities, amenities, places to eat, and other information to help plan their trip. This system also coordinates the collection of recreational opportunities throughout the state of Iowa.

The Interactive Recreation Map on the Iowa DNR website was launched in the summer of 2006. Some of the tourist-related data on this map was provided in cooperation with Iowa Workforce Development. This shared dataset includes locations for hotels, restaurants, hospitals, golf courses, bowling alleys and more. You'll find boating and fishing access points, trout streams, state parks, state preserves, public prairies, and reservable campground areas linked to the Iowa DNR Online Reservation System. This site also includes the most current DNR-owned public lands and wildlife management area boundaries. At this time it does not include recreational opportunities at the city, county, or federal government levels.

E-SCORP would be an expansion of the IDNR interactive recreation map including city, county, and federal agency information, creating a one-stop shopping opportunity for Iowans interested in going outdoors. Being a web-based system, it has the opportunity to reach millions of people who look to various websites and brochures to make multi-day vacation plans, day-trip plans, or conservation volunteer decisions.

### **Challenge**

Currently, each agency, department, or bureau has individual websites and separate brochures that identify resources and recreational opportunities. Combining this information along with photos, maps, hyperlinks, and ongoing maintenance will be a challenge. Representatives from IDNR, County Conservation Boards, City Park & Recreation Association, National Park Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Fish & Wildlife Service, and a tourism representative will create a product that will benefit each agency, as well as the general public.

### **Success Story**

#### **- From the Natural Areas Inventory Website**

A new IDNR interactive mapping site for the Natural Areas Inventory was launched in the fall of 2006. For the first time this site combines current web and Geographical Information System technologies to bring information about threatened, endangered, special concern, and selected rare species data and maps to professional natural resource managers, as well as to the public.


Information in the database is from a variety of sources, including surveys to locate rare plants and animals in their natural habitats; collection of information from museums, herbariums, and scientific literature; and observations from naturalists around the state. Over 8,000 records are contained in the database, ranging from historical observations made in the 1800s to present day sightings. Records in the complete NAI Database are identified as "ecologically sensitive sites" within the Open Records Law (Iowa Code 22.7(21)), used by professional natural resource managers to identify opportunities for conservation, to improve natural resource management, and to conduct environmental reviews to avoid conflicts between development and listed species.


An educational version of the database is open to public viewing. Using the query page, you may create a map showing



the distribution of individual species in counties across the state, and generate a list of species within individual counties. Brief profiles describing habitat preference, threats to survival, recommended management practices, and a photograph (if available) are provided as PDF documents for many of the species.

<http://programs.iowadnr.com/NaturalAreasInventory/pages/Query.aspx>


**Iowa DNR** Interactive Mapping

**Natural Areas Inventory**


[Go Back](#)

**Get State-Wide Data for a Tracked Species.**

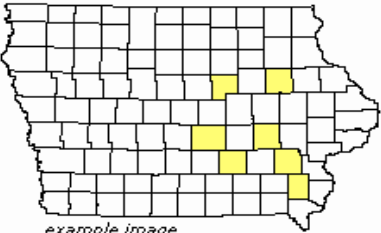
1. Select Species Group:

Animal ▼

2. Select Species Name:

Common Name: - Select -  
*Pick a value from the menu or type the first letter of Common Name.*

Scientific Name: - Select -  
*Pick a value from the menu or type the first letter of Genus.*



*example image*

[Submit](#)

**OR**

**Get List of Tracked Species In a County.**

Select A County:

POLK ▼

[Submit](#)

County	Common Name	Scientific
KEOKUK	Bald Eagle	Haliaeetus leucocephalus
KEOKUK	Indiana Bat	Myotis sodalis
KEOKUK	Slender Ladies'-tresses	Spiranthes

*example image*

## **Performance Goal 2: Using a marketing approach, promote local available recreational opportunities.**

### **Recommendation**

Each Iowan, no matter what age, makes decisions every day on how to spend free time. With so many options available (i.e. malls, movies, after school activities, TV, gaming, etc.) Iowans need to be reminded and encouraged to go outside, walk in the woods, fish in the river, or bike down a trail.

Natural resource agencies aren't selling something tangible like a bottle of pop or a new pair of shoes; they are selling experiences. People make decisions based on experiences. Positive experiences lead to continued and increased participation and an enriched quality of life.

This is what makes a social marketing approach different than traditional product or commercial marketing. According to Webster's Dictionary, social marketing is the application of commercial marketing concepts and techniques to target populations to achieve the goal of positive social change. The aim of this performance goal is to get people outdoors. A secondary effect will be an increase in funds due to license sales, campground stays, bike trail use, and gear purchases.

What do specific recreational users want and need; what keeps them from recreating, what market segments are more interested in which recreational activities? By conducting targeted focus groups, interviews, and general surveys, piloting marketing strategies, and evaluating efforts, agencies, organizations and private enterprise can develop marketing approaches to meet the users' needs. Over time, users' needs change due to technology, time, barriers etc. Marketing efforts need to change and grow to meet these needs and provide the desired opportunities for the users.

### **Challenges**

Marketing has not been a priority in the past for natural resource agencies. In the last five years, agencies started piloting outdoor recreation marketing strategies and evaluating their effectiveness. Iowans surveyed indicated for many activities that if they had additional information about recreational opportunities they might pursue these activities.

### **Success Story**

- Take Me Fishing™ in Iowa: An Evaluation of the 2005 Iowa DNR Marketing Program By Dr. Tony Fedler

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) has been experiencing declining or fluctuating fishing license sales over the past several years. From 2002 to 2004, the number of fishing license buyers declined by five percent. To address declining sales, the IDNR partnered with the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation (RBFF) to develop and implement an integrated marketing and grassroots education plan. A planning team established objectives for the program, developed strategies for accomplishing each objective, and identified a target area for implementing a pilot program. The objectives for the overall program were to:

- Using lessons learned from the first year efforts, increase resident fishing license sales to 2002 levels over a three-year period.
- Reverse the recent trend of 3% annual decrease in fishing license sales. Sell same amount of licenses in target area as in 2004 (41,640) during 2005.
- Over the duration of the marketing campaign (May and June) license sales in the target counties will be 10 percentage points greater than in control counties.

The I-380 Corridor, comprised of Linn, Johnson and Black Hawk Counties was chosen as the target counties for a pilot program to increase fishing license sales among lapsed anglers. The IDNR marketing activities included: creating a major fisheries presence on the IDNR website; mailing a Family Fishing Guide and reminder postcard to selected lapsed anglers; advertising at movie theaters and on the radio; distributing fishing information packets to area libraries; coordinating media coverage for Iowa fishing and IDNR fishing events; partnering with the Iowa Lottery for a special fishing promotion; and distributing special fishing campaign packets to license vendors. Nearly all of this activity occurred during May and June of 2005.

The pilot project achieved its first objective of reversing declining fishing license sales. Sales in the target counties increased by 3% during 2005, while the statewide the average was less than 1%. The goal of 41,640 resident license sales during 2005 in the target area was exceeded by 1,259.

In the three counties where the program occurred, license sales averaged 9% higher during the May-June program compared to counties where no marketing was undertaken. The increase in sales in the target counties during May and June nearly reached the 10% goal in the second objective.

License renewals by lapsed anglers, were significantly higher in the target counties than in the non-target counties during 2005. The lapsed angler messages and information worked with active anglers as well; retention of these anglers was much higher in target counties also.

One or more of the information pieces during the marketing program were remembered by 58% of the lapsed anglers who responded to a post-campaign mail survey. The direct mail advertising was the most common marketing tool lapsed anglers saw and remembered. Information on the IDNR web site, fishing

tips, good locations, and alternative fishing license buying methods all were seen by lapsed anglers at greater rates in the targeted counties.

Lapsed anglers recalling three or more of the marketing advertising and information pieces purchased licenses in 2005 twice as frequently as those seeing none or one to two of the marketing pieces. This finding further supports the need for multiple contacts with anglers to maximize benefits from fishing license marketing activities

### **Performance Goal 3: Encourage Iowans to improve physical and mental health through outdoor recreation**

#### **Recommendation**

You can't turn on the television or radio without hearing advertisements or newscasts on the rising percentages in overweight and obese adults and children. From the South Beach Diet frozen foods in the grocery store to Jenny Craig commercials, the media's focus is on the foods that we eat today. As noted earlier, the amount of leisure time in the United States has decreased, studies show that this reduction in time has contributed to the rise in obesity. With all of the commitments that people have today during work and afterwards, there is little time left to recreate either indoors or outside. According to the National Center for Health Statistics 2003-2004 data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, 66% of U.S. adults are either overweight or obese. These adults are at risk for chronic diseases and disabilities.

We are seeing a drastic rise in weight and obesity, cholesterol, attention deficit disorder, and diabetes in children. They are more scheduled today than ever. They may or may not eat good breakfasts in the morning and after school they participate in structured activities, grab something for the evening meal, do their schoolwork or watch TV. Richard Louv wrote, *Last Child in the Woods: Saving our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder*. The book highlights the fact that a lot of children are no longer active in nature.

The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection and partners initiated "No Child Left Inside." The website [www.nochildleftinside.org/](http://www.nochildleftinside.org/), states it is "a special initiative designed to encourage Connecticut families and visitors alike to enjoy all the recreational resources and outdoor activities that Connecticut's state parks and forests have to offer! From

Campbell Falls State Park in Norfolk, to Talcott Mountain in Bloomfield, to Squantz Pond in New Fairfield, it's time to discover the fresh air and fun of the great outdoors."

Notice that their initiative does not just say children need to get outside and enjoy the resources and activities, but families. In order to contribute to healthy lifestyles, people need to get outdoors. The closer and easier it is to hop on a walking and biking trail the more likely Iowans will do it. For a great success story, Iowans can look at the improvements made to Gray's Lake in Des Moines Iowa, and their associated trails. On nice evenings and weekends, the trails systems are packed with people. More of these trail systems, close to home, should be and can be developed. Resource managers need to also promote their areas as opportunities to improve health as well. It's been shown that just being outdoors is a great way to relieve stress, "getting away from it all." Iowa is blessed with beautiful areas, and great opportunities to get away and explore.

Natural Resource agencies also need to partner with the Iowa Department of Public Health and their Iowans Fit for Life initiative. In their Iowans Comprehensive Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan's ([www.idph.state.ia.us/iowansfitforlife](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/iowansfitforlife)) under the Physical Activity Focus, their strategies fit well with this performance goal. On the following page is the strategy as outlined in Iowans Comprehensive Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan.

## **Create more opportunities for physical activity in communities.**

*Healthy Iowans 2010 goals: 16-3, 16-8, 16-10*

*Socio-ecological model: community, policy*

### **Partners**

**Bike to Work Week**

**Hawkeye Valley Area Agency on Aging**

**Heritage AAA**

**Hoerner YMCA**

**Iowa Arthritis Program**

**Iowa Department of Public Health**

**Iowa State University: Landscape Architecture Extension**

**Page County Public Health**

**University of Iowa Prevention Research Center**

### **Target Population: policy makers**

- Partner with the American Society of Landscape Architects, American Planning Association, Department of Economic Development, Department of Transportation, Department of Natural Resources and other interested land-use partners to increase the number of physical activity friendly environments.
- Increase the use of Iowa trails.
- Increase the number of physical activity opportunities through parks and recreation services, particularly in small towns.
- Develop media partnerships to establish a system to provide messages for targeted audiences.
- Enhance and expand Lighten Up Iowa by increasing promotion through Iowans Fit for Life and providing mini-grants for whole communities to be involved.
- Increase the number of physical activity opportunities in faith-based and other organizations.

### **Target Population: Faith-based and other organizations**

- Partner with parish programs, Parish Nurses Association,

clergy associations, and church wellness committees to increase the number of low-cost exercise classes for adults and seniors and play and/or game opportunities for toddlers and youth.

### **Target Population: Older adults**

- Increase the number of wellness programs for older Iowans.

### **Challenges**

Looking at health and well being, like marketing, is not a management tool that has been traditionally used by natural resource agencies. This will demand working with partner groups that we might not have tapped into before. Health organizations, school physical education teachers and nurses, and the insurance industry to name a few. Through campaigns and no-smoking bans, the United States decreased the number of smokers across the nation, taking the number one contributor to mortality and replacing it with overweight and obese adults. We all contributed to a decrease in smoking and we can all contribute to this, especially when our resources depend on getting people outdoors and into nature.

### **Success Story**

You have to look to our neighbor to the north west to a great example of how natural resource and health agencies can join together to get people outdoors and healthy. South Dakota has a program entitled Healthy South Dakota, Live Better Grow Stronger ([www.healthysd.gov](http://www.healthysd.gov)). The Department of Public Health in this state has partnered with their Department of Fish and Game for a great website, brochures, and other media to promote healthy lifestyles including getting outdoors. Attached on page 31 is a page off of their newest website addition aimed at the healthy benefits of hunting. They have also produced trail maps for park trails that indicated heart healthy loops for varying degrees of physical exertion and are constantly reminding people to get outdoors.





SD Dept. of Health Healthy Hunter - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View Go Bookmarks Tools Help

http://www.healthysd.gov/HealthyHunter/eatingforthehunt/index.html

Windows Media Windows

SD Dept. of Health Healthy Hunt...



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CLICK HERE FOR MORE DETAILS

South Dakota  
Department of Health

Pre-season Training Tips | Eating for the Hunt | Recipes from Mild to Wild! | Contact Us | [www.healthysd.gov](http://www.healthysd.gov)



Fruits, vegetables, grains and legumes tend to be low in fat and have no cholesterol. Most are also good sources of dietary fiber, complex carbohydrates and vitamins. The American Heart Association suggests that you eat foods high in complex carbohydrates and fiber (some kinds of soluble fiber, such as pectin and oat bran, when eaten in large amounts in a diet low in saturated fat, may reduce total cholesterol and LDL cholesterol). The American Heart Association suggests eating 25–30 grams of dietary fiber per day.


**Guidelines for Healthy Eating**

Fruits, vegetables, grains and legumes tend to be low in fat and have no cholesterol. Most are also good sources of dietary fiber, complex carbohydrates and vitamins. The American Heart Association suggests that you eat foods high in complex carbohydrates and fiber. The American Heart Association suggests eating 25–30 grams of dietary fiber per day.

.....[MORE](#)△

**Food Guide Pyramid**

For a quick estimate of what and how much you need to eat, enter your age, sex, and activity level in the MyPyramid Plan box.



.....[MORE](#)△

**Ten Easy Tips**

Experts agree the key to healthy eating is the time-tested advice of balance, variety and moderation. In short, that means eating a wide variety of foods without getting too many calories or too much of any one nutrient. These 10 tips can help you follow that advice while still enjoying the foods you eat.

.....[MORE](#)△

**5 A DAY**

Men need more fruits and vegetables, but tend to consume less of them. Eating fruits and vegetables can be one of the easiest things you can do for your health. [Click here](#) for more on why fruits and vegetables are important, what eating the recommended servings a day looks like and tips to help you consume more each day.

.....[MORE](#)△

**Healthy Hunter Workout**

A 6-week nutrition and physical activity plan to help you get ready for the hunt. (PDF Format)

.....[MORE](#)△

**Tips for Eating Out**

Four Strategies to Eating Healthy at Fast Food Restaurants. (PDF Format)

Done

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## **Performance Goal 4: Provide for local outdoor skills workshops and programs (families, couples, men, women, teens, and children) to help get people outdoors and active.**

### **Recommendation**

Research has shown that if someone participates in one activity they are likely to participate in more. Nationally, people recreate in at least 1-3 different activities. Outdoor skills workshops or events are a great tool to help increase success or enjoyment in a desired activity as well as an opportunity to introduce participants to new ones.

As more people move into urban and suburban areas and have less connection with the outdoors, there will be less participation in certain activities. This does not necessarily mean that they do not have an interest in participating, they just might not know how to get started or where to go. Providing outdoor skills workshops or programs in areas, on topics, and to targeted audiences that are involved in marketing efforts will be another tool to get more people participating.

In the 2006 survey, two areas that had the highest unmet demand and therefore, potential for increased participation were in attending festivals and events and attending environmental education programs. Providing for outdoor skills workshops and programs should be favorably met by Iowans. This does not mean, however, that you can have one workshop that will meet all needs. Workshops should be developed so that the interests of young children through seniors, singles through families, men and women can be met. These audiences are different and are potentially interested in different outdoor activities. From the survey, older Iowans are most interested in wildlife watching and family activities that can involve everyone. On the other hand, college age and young couples are interested in more adventurous and multiple opportunities.

For more information on what recreational opportunities different demographic groups are interested in, check out the 2006 SCORP Recreational Survey and supporting nonparametric analysis data in Appendix B.

### **Challenges**

To be effective, outdoor skills workshops and/or programs should be spread throughout the state and developed to meet local needs. Surveys or assessments of the local population are necessary for determining local interests and needs. Naturalists and other organizations that organize the workshops and programs should participate in county or regional recreation planning efforts. The direction and emphasis of these plans will provide direction for future workshop planning efforts.

### **Success Story**

Women in the Outdoors (WITO) is a program sponsored by the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF), that teaches women outdoor skills at the local level. The program is about learning new skills, meeting new people and spending time with family and friends.

The Boone County WITO program debuted in the summer of 2002 as a joint venture between the Boone County Conservation Board and the Scenic Valley Chapter of the NWTF. The “Outdoor Adventure” was held at Don Williams Lake, near Ogden, and drew 23 women from the Boone area. The program targeted scout leaders/groups, mother/daughter groups, and other local women with interest in the outdoors. In 2003 the program grew to 35 participants and by 2004 to 60 participants. It is one of the most successful programs in the NWTF region. Other WITO events have been held in Salix, Indianola, Inwood, Decorah and Dunlap. Success of the WITO program is due to the local setting and by using local volunteers and instructors with skills to share.





Women in the Outdoors Workshop at the Annett Nature Center in Warren County. Photos courtesy of Warren County Conservation Board.



## Plan Goal 2: Increase availability of outdoor recreation resources

Less than 2 percent of Iowa's land is in public ownership. Most recreational opportunities take place on land that is owned by city, county, state or federal government. Based on information in Plan Goal 1, if Iowans need to get outdoors and recreate more, the resource areas that we currently have need to be enlarged (through public, private, or public/private partnerships). This will be needed to not only accommodate the use, but also to allow resource managers to provide for recreation not at the expense of the flora and fauna habitats. This balance is challenging, but necessary for the future of natural resources.

This plan goal identifies two performance goals to increase resources available for recreation.

- Expand existing public lands and public lands near population centers
- Create conservation corridors (greenbelts) to improve water quality, recreation opportunities, and wildlife habitat.



## **Performance Goal 5: Increase outdoor associated recreation, focusing on additions to existing public lands and public lands near population centers.**

### **Recommendation**

In 2005, the Department submitted to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service a document entitled, "Securing a Future for Fish and Wildlife: a Conservation Legacy for Iowans." This plan clearly laid out action strategies that are applicable to this plan. To maintain consistency between the two plans, permission has been granted to directly refer to the action strategies compiled and written by Jim Zoher, eResources, for the wildlife plan.

Currently 1.3 million Iowans participate in wildlife-associated recreation and it is estimated that 10-14 million Iowans visit state parks alone. To accommodate additional users, public access for a variety of recreational uses must be assured on public and private lands and waters wherever these activities are compatible with sound management practices.

In a state that depends on a strong agricultural economy, especially in rural areas, the conversion of row crops to native grassland, wetland, and forested habitats has not traditionally been viewed as a positive economic action. After 20 years of serving as a focus area for habitat restoration, Dickinson County, Iowa stands out as one of the only areas within all of northwest Iowa that is gaining in population. This area has also developed one of the strongest tourism economies in the state, and it is based around the natural resources of the area.

Now, agricultural threats are giving way to development threats. The local partnerships fostered through other natural resource projects are now stepping forward to ensure that development pressures do not threaten the natural resources that attracted residents, businesses, and tourists in the first place. A recent acquisition, the Yarns property, is a 93 acre tract with 3,500 feet

of undeveloped shoreline along Spirit Lake in Northwest Iowa. The Yarns family agreed to sell the property to conservation interests despite the huge interest in the property by development interests. The community stepped up and organized a huge fund-raising campaign to acquire the property. While there was considerable discussion about how to raise the money to acquire this tract, there was little debate over the value this natural area provides to the entire Iowa Great Lakes region, local residents, and tourists', recreational opportunities and quality of life.

Over the past 20 years Iowa conservation partners have been working to build complexes wherever possible. Acquisitions to existing public lands will be sought to provide for larger blocks of continuous public ownership (see figure 8, existing protected land practices on page 32). Larger blocks of continuous natural resources habitat are critical protected travel corridors for flora and fauna. Larger areas have the potential for a greater diversity in flora and fauna species, providing for healthier ecosystems. Healthier systems will also provide for increased recreational opportunity for Iowans (hiking, wildlife watching, hunting, gathering of natural products, etc.).

### **Challenges**

As information, education, and marketing approaches are increased, recreational use should also increase on public lands. With increased use, will also come more user versus natural resource conflicts. Resource managers will be key in developing best use management practices for these areas, protecting the areas habitat for flora and fauna while providing appropriate areas for public recreation. Therefore, it is critical that the public have available to them, information through brochures, websites, and on-site informational panels the value of the resource at the area, and where and how it is appropriate to recreate there.



[illegible]

## **Success Story**

- Bird Viewing Stations = Increased Visitation to State Park  
By Tim Gedler, Park Manager, Walnut Woods State Park

Walnut Woods State Park staff and volunteers built a bird viewing blind and feeder station in 2003. Local citizens and businesses donated the \$2,000 needed to build the blind, the bird feeders and mounting materials.

The blind and feeding station is centrally located with signs along the main park road directing visitors to it. Since its completion, the viewing blind has attracted new visitors from the day-use and overnight visitor base at the park.

The viewing blind provides a comfortable facility for older and young visitors. Cross country skiers, campers, scouts, church groups are using the facility, many of which return to the park to view the birds. Visitors are expressing their appreciation and enjoyment for the facility, oftenseeing bird species not seen at their home feeders.

The blind has also been an effective tool for park staff to incorporate on organized nature hikes.

Local organizations, businesses, and private citizens donated money and seed for keeping feeders filled all year.

Facilities such as bird viewing stations can be effective at turning non-resource related park visits into meaningful natural resource experiences. These visitors often tell others about their experience. The result is increased, positive use and awareness of natural resources by state park visitors.

## **Performance Goal 6: Create conservation corridors (greenbelts) to improve water quality, recreation opportunities, and wildlife habitat**

### **Recommendation**

Some of the most beautiful scenery in Iowa can only be seen from its waterways. These waterways and associated upland habitats are also critical for water quality protection and for the transportation of fish and wildlife populations.

Iowa's river floodplains were once incredibly diverse habitats. The rivers meandered throughout the floodplain and frequently changed course leaving oxbows and off-shoots that provided important habitat for fish and wildlife. This process was repeated over thousands of years creating a variety of wetlands throughout the floodplain. Prior to installing drainage tile and ditches, water would flow overland from adjacent uplands and fill these depressions during spring and fall. These broad floodplains were, and still are, important for migratory birds and waterfowl.

Iowa is a place of international importance for North America's migratory birds. Bordered by the Missouri and Mississippi rivers, Iowa is positioned along an important migration route. The Prairie Pothole Region in north central Iowa, has global importance as a nesting area for migratory birds. Estimated wetland loss in the Prairie Pothole Region is as high as 98 percent and less than 1 percent of the native grasslands associated with these wetlands remain today. Statewide, wetland loss estimated to exceed 85 percent.

The Department of Natural Resources is working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to acquire and restore oxbows and offshoots along the Missouri River as well as on projects in the floodplains above Coralville, Rathbun, and Red Rock reservoirs. The DNR also works with Ducks Unlimited, county conservation boards, USDA and others on wetland and corridor projects. Those projects include Chichaqua Bottoms Greenbelt along the South Skunk River in northeast Polk County, the Iowa River

Corridor along the Iowa River in Tama and Iowa counties, Sedan Bottoms along the Chariton River in Appanoose County, and several other locations within the state.

The Department, along with many partnering organizations, recently received a \$1 million dollar request to restore similar type wetlands along the Cedar and Wapsipinicon Rivers in eastern Iowa. This builds off of the success of a previous North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grant for the Wapsipinicon River completed in the past year.

Through cooperative work between public and private entities, acquisitions, easements, water quality monitoring, and volunteer river clean-up efforts on new corridors or existing corridors can be enhanced and enlarged. Increasing and enhancing these corridors will lead to a decrease in fragmentation, create larger travel corridors for fish and wildlife species, and enrich water recreational experiences for users.

### **Challenges**

Iowa has 19,000 miles of interior rivers, all of which have potential for enhancement to existing greenbelts or creation and restoration of new ones. Most land adjacent to waterways is under private ownership, meaning the majority of restoration or enhancement efforts must come through cooperation and/or partnerships with different agencies, organizations, and private landowners.

## **Success Story**

-Wetland Protection and Restoration on the Cedar-Wapsi Rivers  
By: Todd Bishop, Wildlife Bureau PPJV Coordinator

The Cedar-Wapsi project focuses on wetland protection and restoration through public land acquisition within the Cedar and Wapsipinicon River watersheds in northeastern Iowa. The project area is in the Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Joint Venture (UMRGLJV) region, and is within the Mississippi River Tributaries focus area for Iowa identified in the most recent joint venture implementation plan.

Activities in this project area will contribute significantly toward the focus area goals of increasing breeding habitat by 2% and increasing breeding duck numbers by 5% by the year 2013.

The Cedar and Wapsipinicon Rivers are considered to be among the best remaining examples of major interior rivers in the entire Upper Mississippi River Basin. These watersheds have been identified for protection in a number of conservation plans due to the diversity of habitats and wildlife species found in this area. The Wapsipinicon River has been designated as a "Protected Water Area" because of its scenic and natural qualities. These rivers are characterized by broad floodplains which contain little development and consist of an extensive series of old river oxbows, channel off-chutes, and other forested wetlands. This area historically was also comprised of a surprising number of palustrine emergent wetlands associated with tallgrass prairie habitat located within the floodplain and in glacially formed basins located higher in the watershed. While many excellent forested wetland habitats remain, a majority of the palustrine emergent wetlands have been filled with silt or have been drained and now provide little benefit to wetland dependant wildlife species.



For more than half a century, the state and various county conservation boards have been partnering with conservation organizations to acquire lands and develop wetland complexes within the Cedar and Wapsipinicon River watersheds. Approximately 916 acres of wetlands will be conserved through protection (567 acres) and restoration (349 acres). In addition, 660 acres of wetland-associated tallgrass prairie will be restored along with protection of 385 acres of forested habitats. Many of these new acquisitions will be adjacent to existing public lands and will permit the restoration of larger wetland areas that could not have been developed without the additional lands.

This project is also an important part of a major migration corridor for birds moving between the Central Mississippi River and the Prairie Pothole Region which are both priority areas identified in the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP). The Cedar and Wapsipinicon River watersheds are important production areas for Wood Ducks and Mallards. This area also supports good numbers of breeding Blue-winged Teal and Canada Geese. This area is important to the Trumpeter Swan and River Otter restoration programs and also supports a breeding population of sandhill cranes. Audubon has established 10 Important Bird Areas within the project area and listed another 22 candidate sites based on the number and diversity of birds observed on these sites during migration and breeding seasons.

All lands acquired will be managed as public wildlife management areas and will be open to hunting and all other non-conflicting uses such as hiking, bird watching, photography, and education. This area will contribute significantly to the economies of local communities that already have developed business and tourism opportunities around the natural resources of the Cedar and Wapsipinicon Rivers.

## Plan Goal 3: Enhance the quality of outdoor recreation resources.

Iowans expect a certain “experience” while recreating in natural resources areas. These experiences depend on many factors, most of which agencies do not have control over, like weather, time constraints and the price of gas. Agencies do have control over the look of their areas, the amenities offered and staff interactions. This section focuses on four performance goals that address the quality of the resources. They are:

- Provide assistance (technical and financial) to local communities and governments for water quality improvements (lakes, cold and warm water, wetlands, groundwater) to revitalize recreational use.
- Plan, develop, and maintain natural resources through an ecosystem based approach to protect the area’s endemic flora and fauna and to provide a quality recreational experience.
- Enhance public health and safety and protect environments through new developments or upgrading of horizontal infrastructure facilities to meet current environmental standards as well as today’s recreational demand.
- Enhance recreational opportunities through upgrading or constructing new vertical infrastructure facilities (buildings, playgrounds, recreation structures) to respond to current recreational demands.





## **Performance Goal 7: Provide assistance to local communities and governments to improve the quality and revitalize the recreational use of priority water bodies**

### **Recommendation**

Improving the condition of Iowa's water resources on priority water bodies to ensure a safe drinking water supply, attract wildlife, support fish, recreational opportunities is critical.

Lakes are popular among Iowans with 60 percent saying they have visited a lake each year, on an average of eight times. Lakes on the impaired waters list are attractive targets for water quality improvement projects. An easy way to show improving water quality is by reducing the number of these waterbodies listed on the impaired waters list.

The Department of Natural Resources is working to restore impaired lakes to improve the quality of life and to demonstrate water quality improvement through local partnerships.

These improvements also stimulate economic growth, as Iowans heavily use lakes for water based recreation. Communities rally around these water resources as they seek population growth and economic success. The Iowa Great Lakes, Storm Lake, Crystal Lake, Creston and Clear Lake are obvious examples, but Osceola, Marshalltown, Newton, and Brighton are identifying the importance of lakes for their futures, as well. This trend will only grow as other communities see opportunities to attract visitors, expand their economies and to improve their quality of life.

A major step to improving water quality, and a priority of the Land & Water Conservation Fund, is to re-establish or restore wetlands, that filter nutrients, and improve the water quality and available uses of lakes, rivers and streams. The long-term health and function of wetlands requires active management of water levels, aquatic vegetation, and fish populations as well as some level of management on adjacent terrestrial lands to minimize the

rate silt and other harmful chemicals accumulate in the wetland. A healthy wetland provides a great number of environmental benefits; not the least of which is providing cleaner water in lakes and rivers where Iowans recreate and underground aquifers that supply much of Iowa's drinking water.

Wetland systems that undergo periodic wet and dry cycles are the best examples of natural wetlands that exist today. Unfortunately, many large wetlands are maintained in a constant open-water state and no longer undergo dry cycles. These water bodies are now commonly referred to as muddy, low quality lakes not capable of supporting quality fish, wildlife or recreational uses. A new effort called the Living Lakes Initiative will begin returning these large wetlands to the healthy, dynamic systems they once were. The plan calls for periodic dry cycles, for the protection and restoration of natural shoreline habitats and installing a buffer of natural terrestrial and small wetlands around the marsh to reduce sediment and other pollutants entering the marsh.

Creating quality lakes, rivers, streams and wetlands will greatly improve habitats and diversity of flora and fauna, provide for a wider variety of recreation and improving the overall quality of life.

### **Challenges**

Historically, water quality improvement efforts have been disjointed, to say the least. The challenge is to get agencies, interest groups, educators, private citizens and legislators to work in the same direction, using approaches and techniques that can be replicated across the state. Everyone has a stake in making Iowa rivers, streams, and lakes better.

## **Success Story**

- Seeing results: Cleaner, healthier Water

From: IDNR Lake Darling: A snapshot of success brochure

### *The truth is in the numbers*

During the course of watershed projects, the amount of sediment reaching Lake Darling has dropped from 16,259 tons per year to 6,978 tons per year. Less sediment in the lake means better water clarity. Bacteria levels have dropped dramatically at a number of testing sites.

As you'll read below, Lake Darling showed high bacteria levels when the DNR began monitoring state park beaches in 2000. Those results led to swimming advisories being posted at the beach, and many visitors stayed away from the beach and the park.

But improvements in the watershed, combined with the bacterial monitoring, have led to improvements at the beach. In 2005, only three swimming advisories were posted, half the number of a year before and a significant decrease from the 11 advisories posted in 2002. Read on to see how these improvements are impacting the park and nearby communities.

### *Park use affects The Home of Lake Darling*

The sign into town welcomes visitors to "the Home of Lake Darling." The small town of Brighton, just east of the park, is proud of its lake. A few years ago, though, the lake wasn't pulling in the people it once did.

A number of swimming advisories posted at the park's beach due to high bacteria levels didn't mean just fewer swimmers, said

Faye Vittetoe, a Brighton veterinarian who enjoys the park's quiet trails.

Vittetoe, like other Brighton residents, noticed a decrease in people visiting the park after the advisories were posted. There were fewer campers to bring in their pets for care. Ice fishing was becoming big, Vittetoe said, but anglers stayed away after the attention the lake got during the summer.

"When people think of Brighton, they think of the lake," said Rose Jaynes, who owns B.J.'s, a convenience store in Brighton. "Water quality definitely impacts people's image of the lake, and it's always hard to get rid of the negative image."



Because of its large watershed, the lake has always had problems, said Merrill Lucas, park manager at Lake Darling State Park. In his 32 years at the park, he would see heavy rains wash in sediment and bacteria. When swimming advisories began popping up, day use and fishing went down. But now the new ponds throughout the watershed are trapping that sediment and bacteria before they reach the lake.

As the water quality has improved over the past few years, Lucas and Vittetoe have seen camping and park use begin to rebound, and both anticipate more people will visit the park this coming summer.

"It's improving and will keep improving," said Lucas. "I felt like this year, with more boat rentals and more people swimming, it was coming back. I think park use will continue to come back once people realize water quality is improving here."

If water quality had continued to decline, Vittetoe said the park would have been used less, local businesses would be hurt and people might have even moved out of Brighton.

While Jaynes said many different economic issues factor into the success of her business, which is located on the highway leading to the lake, continuing poor water quality could result in fewer people coming through Brighton.

The small town's population of about 670 has remained pretty stable over the past few years, but Vittetoe expects that as water quality continues to improve, the town and surrounding areas will grow.

Jaynes also knows the importance of the lake to the community.

"We have it pretty good here," Jaynes said. "It's nice to drive just three miles to take a hike, watch deer or take kids to the beach. I can't imagine it not being here."

#### *Fish feed on improved water quality*

Everyone benefits from improved water quality at Lake Darling. Even the fish. And that's good news for anglers who come to Lake Darling for a shot at the bass, bluegill, crappie and catfish.

With better water quality, the lake is seeing blooms of beneficial algae. Microscopic zooplankton feed on the algae, small fish feed on the zooplankton, and large fish snack on the small fish.

"It's fired up the food chain," said Don Kline, a DNR fisheries biologist who has worked at Lake Darling for 35 years. "The fish are very plump. They have eaten well this summer and are ready to go into winter."

Kline believes people have noticed the improved water quality and will visit the lake more often next summer. He saw more people fishing at the lake this fall than he has in many years, he said.

"I've noticed a dramatic change in the past two years," said Kline.

"The work that's going on in the watershed has really had an effect."



## **Performance Goal 8: Plan, develop, and maintain natural resources through an ecosystem based approach to protect the endemic flora and fauna and provide a quality recreational experience.**

### **Recommendation**

Controlling the introduction and preventing the spread of non-native fish, plant and wildlife species has become a major undertaking for natural resource managers. Wetlands, forests, rivers and open areas - all areas important to Iowans - are under constant threat from aggressive invaders, like purple loosestrife, zebra mussels, honeysuckle, garlic mustard and Asian carp. These invasives can choke an area and quickly deplete it of natural habitats if left to get out of control. Which can also impact recreational experiences.

Resource managers, organizations and private landowners need to use an ecosystem based management approach to control invasives and protect endemics. This approach takes in biological, social and economic factors to develop a management plan that will protect and enhance diversity and productivity of habitats and their associated flora and fauna. When done correctly, this management can lead to a sustainable complex of natural resource systems that can provide quality recreational experiences. In 'Securing A Future For Fish and Wildlife,' strategies have been indicated in the action plan that will provide for appropriate ecosystem based management and control of invasive species. This plan also puts into place strategies for long-term monitoring for effectiveness and diversity for the complex of natural resource areas.

### **Challenges**

Appropriate management cannot happen just on public areas. With less than 2 percent of Iowa land in public ownership, work

on private lands becomes crucial to the success of healthy ecosystems. Resource managers need to continue working with natural resource organizations and private landowners. Private land conservation efforts are links between public lands and assist in building diverse systems to which natural resources and recreational interests can coexist and grow.

### **Success Story**

#### **Fighting the War on Honeysuckle**

By John Walkowiak, Forestry Bureau Chief

The sweet smell of honeysuckle flowers in the spring can be a wonderful scent to hikers and nature lovers, but it can also signal a problem – one that Iowa foresters and natural resource managers are waging a war on – invasive plants. Honeysuckle shrubs once introduced as a tool for soil conservation and wildlife habitat have become aggressive invaders of natural forests and savannas across much of Iowa. Honeysuckle's success can be attributed to its ability to leaf out early in the spring and hang on to its leaves well past the late fall, in addition it's heavy and regular seed crops allow it to spread easily by birds and small animals.

An invasive plant by definition is a non-native (alien) plant to a natural ecosystem. Once introduced, it causes economic or environmental harm or harm to human health, as the name implies, and can spread rapidly and displace native species.

Lake Ahquabi State Park, in Warren County, is a 1,000 acre natural area about 30 minutes south of Des Moines. Concern was raised about water quality issues in its 110 acre lake from excessive sedimentation and gullying in the natural forested areas. During field inspections of the natural areas – honeysuckle shrubs that had been planted in the park and the neighboring Hooper Wildlife area dominated the understory of the forested portions of the park. The honeysuckle had become so dense that it shaded the ground bare of native vegetation



allowing soil erosion, and was so thick and tall that it was impossible for humans and wildlife to walk through.

Natural resource managers from Iowa DNR Fisheries, Forestry, Parks and Wildlife worked together on a Honeysuckle management project that involved using a large brush mower to get the honeysuckle down to working size. An area of 92 acres was designated for mowing using a contractor, then crews from the DNR partners sprayed the sprouting honeysuckle with herbicides to kill it. Over the past three years, follow up herbicide treatments have kept the honeysuckle in check and plans are for using prescribed fire to rejuvenate native vegetation. The demonstration site has been visited by public and private landowners who are copying the technique on their own lands.



Lake Ahquabi State Park honeysuckle prior to treatment



Lake Ahquabi State Park honeysuckle after treatment. Photos courtesy of the Forestry Bureau

**Performance Goal 9. Enhance public health and safety and protect environments through upgrading or developing new horizontal infrastructure (electric, wastewater treatment, trails) facilities to meet current environmental standards as well as today's recreational demand.**

### **Recommendation**

Today's camping experience is different from 20 years ago. Going into nature today often means taking technology along. The decision to visit one park versus another, or staying home instead may depend on the horizontal infrastructure (electric systems) a park has in place for running computers, TVs and other electronic equipment.

Most recreational facilities in Iowa were constructed in the 1950's and 1960's. As technology and design continue to change and evolve, these outdated systems can no longer keep pace. In state parks, electric system designs in the campgrounds no longer meet the needs of newer and larger recreational vehicles. These systems now feature heaters, air conditioners, refrigerators, satellites, computers and other electronic devices which require larger electrical loads. Likewise, appropriate design of wastewater treatment facilities has changed. This not only affects treatment facilities in cities, but it also resource agencies that operate these facilities on public lands.

These upgrades and new developments are not only important to recreational users but, they are also important to the resources where they reside in. Sustainable building techniques will be a tool for changing current systems and designing new ones. These techniques offer an opportunity for resource agencies to demonstrate and educate the users, possibly leading to sustainable building design on private properties as well.

### **Challenges**

Simply put, upgrading or designing new systems costs money. Currently sustainable design also costs more than traditional systems, however, they will have a longer life and they are more resource appropriate. There are many systems in city, county, state and federal areas that need upgrades, with some requiring a complete redesign. Upgrading two or three systems a year will be progress, but to cycle through all systems will take many years and special funding through budget appropriations or grants.

### **Success Story**

- Gypsum City Off-highway Vehicle Park = Providing sustainable, responsible recreation opportunities for owners of registered all-terrain vehicles and off-highway motorcycles.

By David Downing, Snowmobile and ATV Program Manager

As the sales of all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and off-highway motorcycles increase at a rate of 30 percent per year, states are struggling to provide recreational opportunities for registered riders and provide the necessary education and law enforcement services.

The IDNR has taken steps to develop legal riding areas and increase enforcement efforts to remove ATVs from sensitive areas.

The blue print for developing a riding area that will provide a quality recreational experience while maintaining sustainable trail systems belongs to the Gypsum City Off-highway Vehicle Park, near Fort Dodge.

The Gypsum City Off-highway Vehicle Park is located in the center of thousands of acres of properties currently and formerly used for the mining of gypsum and the production of gypsum



related products. The park opened with approximately 300 acres of riding area, with a future potential of 1,500 acres.

Shive-Hattery was retained as a land planning consultant to develop a conceptual design plan for the park. The plan outlines development in three phases. In phase one the park entrance, public facilities, parking and riding areas were completed. Phase two will add 190 acres of general riding with emphasis on wildlife planting and habitat restoration. Phase three plans for an additional 1,000 acres of riding area, roadwork, a day use shelter and continued landscape and planting work.

Each phase of the park focuses on sustainable development in design and construction. The park has a chain link perimeter fence that is raised 12 inches off the ground to allow for the free travel of native wildlife. The park has a large population of deer and wild turkey, with beaver and otter now taking up residence in the ponds. The motocross track, kids track, parking lot and safety training areas were constructed with erosion control basins to improve water quality and reduce long-term maintenance. A trail consultant was hired to design and build the extensive trail system using sustainable practices, specific to motorized trails. Areas that were disturbed during construction are now being planted with native grass and wildflowers. A forestry plan is also under development.

During phase two development, a conservation zone, which is off limits to riding, will be constructed to protect sensitive plant and animal species that have been identified on this property.

The riding park is expecting more than 100,000 riders each year, from across Iowa and the Midwest. By taking the steps to develop the Gypsum City Park in a sustainable manner, the Department and its stakeholders are helping to reduce the impacts associated with this growing form of recreation.



Chain link fence perimeter fence 12" off of the ground for wildlife travel. Photo by Dan Kleen

Trail design for the ATV riding area. Photo by Dan Kleen



ATV riders enjoying the trail. Photo by Dan Kleen

## **Performance Goal 10: Enhance recreational opportunities through upgrading or constructing new vertical infrastructure facilities (building playgrounds, recreation structures) to respond to current recreational demands.**

### **Recommendation**

Just as important as addressing horizontal infrastructure needs, the vertical infrastructure (playgrounds, lodges, and cabins) support or enhance desired activities. According to the 2006 recreation survey, Iowans are most interested in family oriented activities, driving for pleasure, observing, feeding, or photographing wildlife within one mile of home, and using trails for physical fitness.

Many facilities in natural resource areas are older structures. There are opportunities while upgrading the facilities to enhance the recreational uses. The Restore the Outdoors Program invested \$22.5 million from 1997 and 2004 to restore and renovate park facilities. Most of the facilities were built in the 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corps and Works Progress Administration. Restoration brought the shelters and lodges back to their original condition but some structures could no longer provide a useful function and were reformed into a facility that could meet multiple needs. One example was the typical large beach building which traditionally had open changing rooms. This practice was no longer done, so these facilities were converted into enclosed lodges or open picnic shelters available for reservation, creating new recreational opportunities. There are many facilities in state and county areas that are in need of or have potential for similar restoration or renovation. Unfortunately, there is limited or no funding for many of these projects.

Based on customer feedback locally or through surveys such as the 2006 recreational survey, sites can also be looked at for new developments that might meet the needs of recreational

users. The success story mentioned in Performance Goal 6 is also another good example for this performance goal. Wildlife watching is one activity continuing to draw interest nationwide. It is an activity that can be done in a backyard by feeding birds or by visiting a natural resources area during migration. Natural resource managers have an opportunity to look at their sites and construct new bird viewing blinds, or enhance existing observation decks or update other facilities to meet similar demands of other recreational activities.

### **Challenges**

As in Performance Goal 10, building new, or upgrading existing facilities is expensive. Most cities have been upgrading municipal swimming pools for the last 10 years, but these are not like swimming pools of the 70s and early 80s. These pools are enhanced with larger and winding slides, lily pad walkways and waterfalls. Once swimming pools started adding these features, it wasn't long before other communities wanted enhanced pools too. A never ending cycle of user demand is driving changes which is driving competition for users.

### **Success Story**

#### **- Cabins in Demand**

By Steve Edwards, Executive Director of the Marion County Conservation Board

The phone would ring and that old familiar question would be asked "Are there any cabins for rent on Lake Red Rock?" This was a question that the Marion County Conservation Board received numerous times through the years and the answer was always the same, "Nope, sorry." And the response on the other end was always the same, "Why not?" Good question.

In June of 1995, the Marion County Conservation Board

opened the doors to four, two bedroom modern rental cabins on the northern shore of Lake Red Rock, in Cordova Park. These cabins were a direct result of the public's demand for another type of recreational opportunity in the Lake Red Rock area. Occupancy for the cabins was overwhelming and running at 100 percent during the recreational season and all weekends and holidays during the non-recreational season. We had done it, providing a new service for the public at Lake Red Rock.

Now the phone rings, "Hi, I'd like to make a cabin reservation," staff response, "Oh, sorry, we don't have any cabins available, they are all reserved."

Response from the other end of the phone, "Ever thought of building more?"

So in 2002, the Conservation Board opened the doors to three more modern cabins, this time each cabin had three bedrooms along with a game room. At least now when the phone rings and someone asks for a cabin reservation, if we can't accommodate them, we tell them "We have seven cabins and yes, we are thinking about more."



Marion County Conservation Board Cabins at Cordova Park. Photos courtesy of MCCB.





## **Plan Goal 4: Encourage state, county, city, and private sector planning for recreation to meet the needs of Iowans.**

Government needs to reach out to their local partner groups and develop a plan for local recreation needs to meet the needs of Iowans.

This plan just focuses on recreation. However, throughout this document I've referenced other plans that this Outdoor Recreation in Iowa Plan links too. Planning is about partnering and what can we do together to make things easier. Priority for this goal is:

- Develop toolboxes for state, city and county leaders for plan development.



## **Performance Goal 11: Develop toolboxes for state, city, and county leaders for plan development.**

### **Recommendation**

The federal government and the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission realized that in order to meet the recreational demands of citizens, planning was needed at the local level. This became one of the main goals of the Land & Water Conservation Fund.

During the 1970's and early 1980's planning was a priority for most recreational agencies across the nation. However, in the late 80's and 90's planning staff and efforts were cut as budgets tightened. Now planning efforts are being re-established nationally.

In the planning process, agencies must first know what it is that the user is interested in and how much time and money they are willing to spend. Then assess what is available to meet these needs and determine what they need to do to enhance or develop to meet these demands. Then as was mentioned in Plan Goal 1, let Iowans know what is available.

Unknown to most grantees of the Land & Water Conservation Fund is the requirement that all grant submissions must have a copy of their local recreation plan attached. Some counties have current county-wide conservation plans that were developed by Resource Enhancement and Protection Fund (REAP) committees. Many plans, however, are outdated. Planning toolboxes for cities and counties will be developed by the Department of Natural Resources and partner groups to assist in the development of natural resource planning for habitat preservation, enhancement, and recreation. This toolbox will include steps to develop the planning committee, a sample plan, and resource guide. To further enhance planning efforts, the Department and/or outside consulting services, will work with

pilot areas across the state to develop their local plans. These local plans will then be available as samples for other local area planning efforts.

By the 2008 submittal of the Land & Water Conservation Fund all grantees will submit a copy of their local plan along with their grant request. These local plans will also provide useful documentation for other grant opportunities mentioned on page 17.

### **Challenges**

It is not uncommon to have an organization such as The Nature Conservancy, city parks, county conservation boards, state areas, and federal areas all located within one county. By partnering together to develop a plan including county-wide or region-wide strategies, implementation, and success measures will be challenging. Once completed though, the planning group needs to continue to discuss and evaluate the plan and update the plan at least every 5 years.

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